

Helping Communities Plan for the Future

A Two-Year Progress Report from Growth Management Services

Growth management works in Washington

Washington communities continued to make progress in their growth management planning during state fiscal years 2003 and 2004. Growth Management Services, a program of the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED), assisted communities in these efforts.

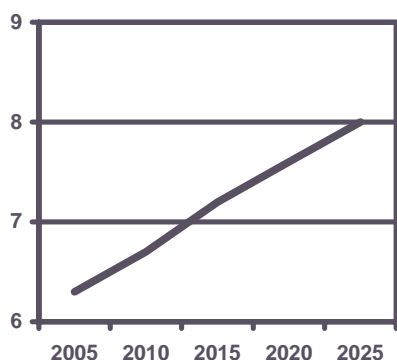
More compact urban development was built in large and smaller communities, helping reduce urban sprawl. Many Western Washington counties, such as Pierce, have directed an increasing amount of growth in urban areas rather than rural. Growth patterns in Washington state are changing.

Local governments received more than \$5.5 million in growth management grants during the two-year period. This funding helped plan for economic development, critical areas protection, rural areas, capital facilities, transportation, and public involvement projects.

Growth Management Services staff also provided direct consultation and assistance to all 320 cities and counties in their planning work.

Many growth management challenges remain for local governments in their growth management planning. The state's population is expected to grow by nearly 2 million by 2025.

Washington Population Growth (in millions)



Communities will need to plan well for future growth that will dramatically change the state's built environment in the next 20 years. Growth Management Services will be there to help them.

Leonard Bauer, Managing Director
Growth Management Services

Growth Management Services' role

The Growth Management Act (GMA) was passed in 1990 to address uncoordinated and unplanned growth that posed a threat to

state's high quality of life. CTED, through its Growth Management Services program, serves as the coordinator of the state's growth management efforts.



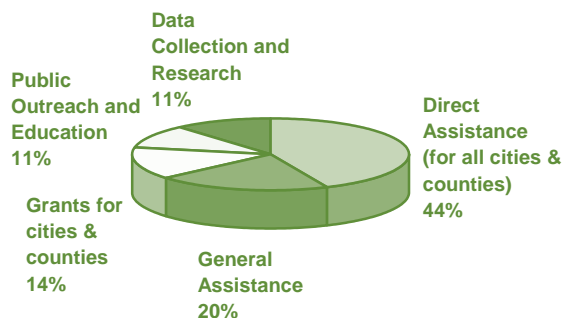
state's high quality of life. CTED, through its Growth Management Services program, serves as the coordinator of the state's growth management efforts.

In addition to its coordination role, the program:

- Provides grants and personal planning assistance by its professional staff.
- Offers training and education to citizens and local government officials.
- Acts as a problem-solver by providing dispute resolution or helping groups find mediators.
- Reviews local plans and regulations for compliance with GMA requirements and makes suggestions on how to carry them out.
- Assists in collecting data on land uses, demographics, and infrastructure and reports on local achievements in meeting GMA goals.

During fiscal years 2003 and 2004, Growth Management Services had 22 staff positions – 18 professional and four administrative support staff. This report summarizes the program's work from July 2002 to June 2004. The staff provides direct and general assistance, disperses grants, carries out research and data collection, and provides training and information.

Growth Management Service Areas (by percent of staff hours)



General guidance — Helpful tools for cities and counties

A better way to plan for sewers, bridges, parks

A new template for creating a capital facilities plan (CFP) is available from CTED. Developed in Microsoft Excel, it helps communities set priorities for capital projects and rate and rank them. The template offers a draft CFP that jurisdictions can fill in. Other tools are included for project management and presentations.

Local jurisdictions who tested the template report it worked well for them. Through use of the template, Cashmere no longer needs to hire a consultant to prepare its CFP, said Michelle Taylor, public works coordinator for the city.

With the pilot project complete, Growth Management Services is offering training sessions and a support program for the template.

Creating compact neighborhoods

At the request of growth management stakeholders, Growth Management Services developed a guidance paper called “Urban Densities – Central Puget Sound Edition.”

The paper discusses density calculation, flexible development techniques such as density bonuses and narrow street widths, and recent guidance on compact urban growth from the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board.



Shoreline guidance

The Legislature amended the GMA and Shoreline Management Act (SMA) in 1995 to partially integrate the two laws. SMA goals and policies became the GMA's 14th goal. Local shoreline goals and policies became a comprehensive plan chapter.

In 2003 a hearings board case was filed about the relationship between the two laws. In response, the Legislature adopted another law to further clarify the relationship. A guidance sheet to help local governments interpret and apply the latest law to has been developed by Growth Management Services and the Department of Ecology.

“The guidance sheet prepared by CTED and Ecology is very helpful in defining how the two acts work together,” said Paul Roberts, public works director for the City of Marysville.

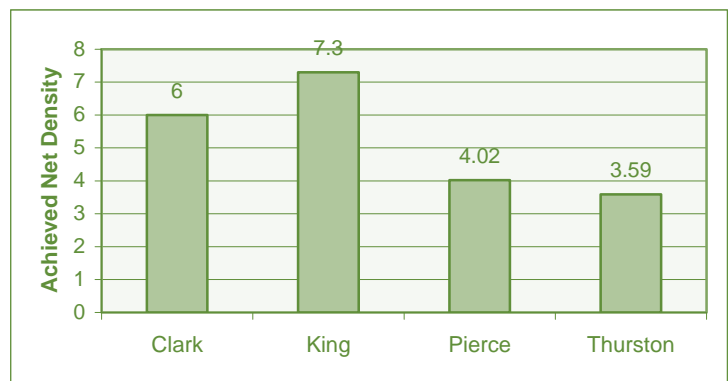
Focusing growth in urban areas

To determine whether the GMA is working, the state created a Buildable Lands Program so local governments in the fastest-growing counties could find out if they had enough room for growth.

Clark, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston counties issued their first reports in 2002.

CTED prepared a report, *Buildable Lands Program: 2002 Evaluation Report*, on local government findings. The counties indicated their urban growth areas are adequate for 20 years of growth.

The local reports show that achieved residential density in the urban growth areas is greater than 3.6 units per acre. (See the chart below.)



Designing local programs to protect critical areas

A guidebook developed by Growth Management Services and other state agencies, called the *Critical Areas Assistance Handbook*, is helping communities decide how to manage critical areas.

“CTED has prepared an excellent handbook that can be used as a starting place (for ordinance development),” said John Adamson, Edgewood Department of Community Development director.

Studio Cascade Inc., a consulting firm, adapted language from the guidebook for developing ordinances for small Eastern Washington communities, said Bill Grimes, AICP, principal of the firm.

The City of Monroe used a draft of the handbook as the outline for its new regulations, said Kate Galloway, AICP, planner for the city.

Publications news and notes

Growth Management Services distributed about 25,000 publications during 2003 and 2004. They included guidebooks, reports, the quarterly newsletter *About Growth*, fact sheets, and other publications.

To obtain growth management publications, call 360-725-3000 or see www.cted.wa.gov/growth.

Direct assistance — Working hand-in-hand with communities

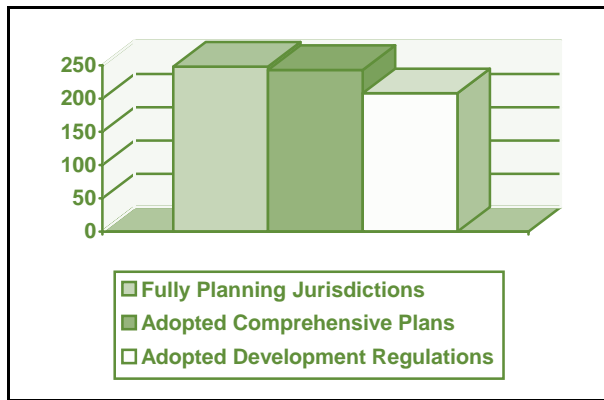
Helping communities achieve their goals through planning

Growth Management Services' Review Team offers comments to local governments on their plans and regulations. It also coordinates the state's review of local plans and regulations.

Database of statewide GMA actions

Between July 2002 and June 2004 CTED received a total of 1,907 GMA documents for review. Of those, 11 staff comprehensively reviewed 925 and provided written comments on 320 to help communities reach their goals.

Most local governments with a full set of growth management requirements have adopted their first plans and regulations under the GMA. (See chart below.)



Progress meeting GMA requirements

Some highlights achieved by local governments:

- Comprehensive plans adopted for the new cities of Liberty Lake and Sammamish.
- New critical areas ordinances for Castle Rock, University Place, Cathlamet, Stevenson, Clarkston, and Malden.

Interagency teams and work groups

Growth Management Services organizes monthly meetings of the Interagency Work Group, which also includes the departments of Fish and Wildlife; Ecology; Transportation; Health; Social and Health Services; Natural Resources; and Agriculture; and the Puget Sound Action Team.

The group exchanges information about the technical assistance that each agency provides to local governments to assist in the review, evaluation, and update of plans and regulations. It also worked on a proposal to allow for expedited review of local regulations.

Using interagency teams, Growth Management Services' planners coordinated joint meetings of state agencies and local governments to resolve issues in Jefferson, Skagit, King, Pierce, and Mason counties.

CTED staff assistance pays off

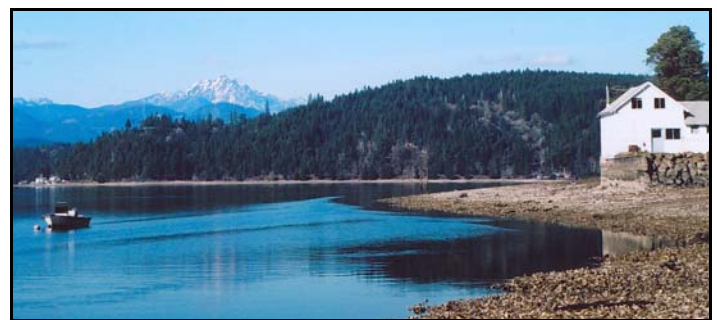
Growth Management Services' planners offer technical and financial assistance to help local officials interpret and carry out the GMA. During fiscal years 2003 and 2004, planners assisted:

- Pacific County in the development of a zoning ordinance, the first in 153 years.
- Stevens and Pend Oreille counties in working toward the adoption of their first GMA compliant comprehensive plans.
- Jefferson County with designating and protecting shoreline aquifer recharge areas, including preventing saltwater intrusion.
- Skagit County develop critical areas designation and conservation of agricultural and resource lands.
- Lewis County work through issues related to the siting the first major industry development outside an urban growth area under the GMA.
- King County as it undertook a comprehensive update of its Critical Areas Ordinance.

County moving ahead on planning

When Mason County officials decided they wanted to come into compliance with the GMA, they set a course of action to complete their requirements.

A hearings board had ruled that certain types of development weren't appropriate in the Skokomish Valley, which floods frequently. The board also stated that inappropriate levels of development in rural areas would cause environmental problems, traffic congestion, and sprawl.



A Growth Management Services' planner coordinated an interagency work team that brought together key players from the county and state agencies. It met frequently to address the issues raised by the board and worked through them.

CTED also provided grants to Mason County for compliance work.

The county came into GMA compliance in 2004. It is now able to receive certain state grants and loans that weren't available when it didn't meet GMA requirements.

Grants — Growth management grants make a difference

Communities reach goals with planning grants

During 2003 Washington local governments were finishing the second year of work on the first two-year grants that Growth Management Services had awarded. Communities used grants ranging from \$4,500 for small towns to \$75,000 for large counties.

During 2004 grant funding was awarded to communities required to update their plans and regulations by December 2004. Grant amounts ranged from \$7,500 to \$90,000.

A new program, emerging issues grants, helped communities during both fiscal years to fund additional projects critical to carrying out their GMA work.

About \$5.5 million was awarded to local governments during 2003 and 2004 to assist communities in hundreds of different ways in their growth management planning.

Here are examples of how the grants were used to enhance community living:

- **Walla Walla** assessed utility capacity in downtown Walla Walla as part of the Downtown Master Plan.
- **Bridgeport** updated the comprehensive plan's capital facilities chapter, focusing on the six-year financial plan.
- **Kent** updated its plan and codes which will enable it to grow according to GMA guidelines. Kent's mapping and the best available science review were instrumental in helping the city evaluate options for updating its critical areas regulations.
- **Lopez Village**, in San Juan County, organized design workshops to encourage high quality community design as residential, institutional, and commercial areas are developed. The grant paid for hiring a design team to assist in conducting the workshops.



City of Stanwood

- **Stanwood** funded a visioning process to create a new downtown plan. The city selected a Design Assistance Team, an intensive charrette process developed by the American Institute of Architects, to lead the effort. One month after the event, a report was reviewed and action committees established.

Here's how grants help communities

Local elected officials and staff offered these comments about their growth management grants:



- “The \$78,750 GMA Update grant that **Chelan County** received is already making a significant positive impact on the county. Staff is utilizing the data collected in population negotiations with the cities, urban growth areas analysis, a public facilities inventory, a land use inventory, and plan and regulation updates.” **David R. Grimes, Long Range Planning Manager**
- “**Steilacoom** used its \$15,750 GMA Update grant to review comprehensive plan goals and policies, investigate possible zoning ordinance changes, and review the best available science for use in redrafting the Critical Areas Ordinance. In addition to these accomplishments, the effort has also yielded an increased awareness of the comprehensive plan by local citizens.” **Ron Lucas, Mayor**
- “**Friday Harbor** was able to update its 2001 comprehensive plan with CTED's \$10,000 grant. It enabled us to make all of the necessary changes that related to the 2000 Census. This included a better understanding of our housing situation on San Juan Island and insight into possible solutions to this problem.” **Michael Bertrand, Land Use Administrator**
- “**Grand Coulee** used its \$5,250 grant to review the existing comprehensive plan. By going through this planning process, the city determined that a proposed urban growth area expansion wasn't appropriate at this time.” **Tammara Byers, Mayor**
- “**Bremerton** has largely accomplished a major rewrite of the city's 1995 comprehensive plan with its \$36,750 grant. The city is pleased that the plan update process accomplished under the grant has resulted in a new planning framework for the community. The new framework promises to create a more effective, ambitious, and forward thinking approach to guiding the future course of the community.” **Cary Bozeman, Mayor**

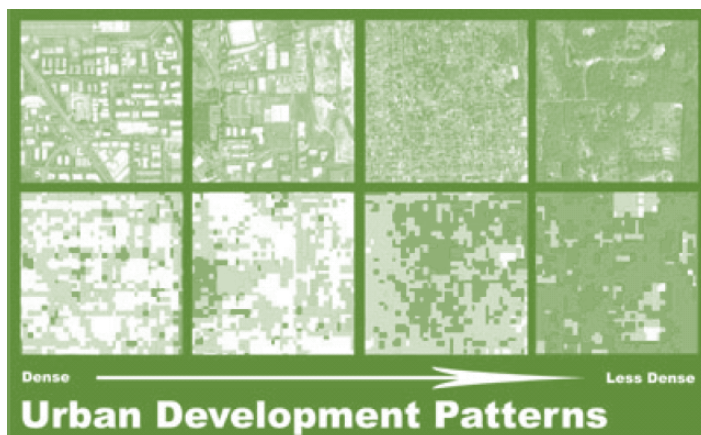
Public outreach — Getting growth management information to those who need to know

Monitoring growth using satellite imagery

A study for Growth Management Services by University of Washington's Urban Ecology Research Lab is looking at ways to monitor changes in the landscape to determine the effectiveness of urban growth management policies.

The lab completed a Phase I study, *Landscape Benchmarks Project*. Remote sensing data (Landsat satellite images) and U.S. Census data for 1990 and 2000 were used, focusing on the Central Puget Sound region. The study showed that satellite imagery combined with other information can be valuable to describe urban development patterns.

Phase II, to be completed in 2005, will develop specific measures for GMA goals related to changes in land use patterns over time.



Conferences offer an important opportunity to reach public

Growth Management Services:

- Sponsored a track on rural economic development at the Planning Association of Washington's Spring 2003 Conference.
- Co-sponsored the affordable housing conference, Housing Washington in 2003 and 2004, along with other CTED divisions and the Housing Finance Commission.
- Co-sponsored the 2003 annual conference of the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association.
- Organized four regional, quarterly planning forums; three in Western Washington and one in Eastern Washington. At the forums, local planners share information and successes.
- Sponsored a GMA/environment track at the Planning Association of Washington's Spring 2004 Conference.
- Co-sponsored the 2004 joint conference of Washington and Oregon chapters of the American Planning Association.

Legislative support: Bills reviewed by staff increasing

During the 2003 legislative session, Growth Management Services reviewed 135 bills. They include new laws on annexation, shorelines, and the state's aggregate supply.

During the 2004 session, staff evaluated 150 bills. Among them are laws on rural economic development, accessory uses on farmland, and expedited CTED review of minor amendments to development regulations.

CTED also helped create a GMA Work Group of stakeholders to address needed adjustments to the GMA, which resulted in four laws approved by the Legislature.

Web site reaches wide audience

Growth Management Services' updated Web site, located at www.cted.wa.gov/growth, provides better access to state information for GMA planning. A new alphabetical index offers quick access to technical and financial resources. An extensive collection of research material can be viewed and downloaded through the site.

Short course draws local officials, citizens

The Short Course on Local Planning, a three-hour educational program, provides a basic overview of land use planning in Washington state.

Between July 2002 and June 2004 Growth Management Services sponsored 55 short courses: 14 in Eastern Washington and 41 in Western Washington.

More requests are being received for focused courses

on special topics such as density and infill strategies, economic development, subdivision design, low impact development, and level of service standards.

CTED has sponsored the course for more than 30 years, in collaboration with the Planning Association of Washington.



Newsletter continues to please readers

In *About Growth*, more than 2,000 readers learn from local people about how communities plan for growth and carry out their plans. Planners, elected officials, consultants, and citizens write informative articles that offer examples for other local governments.

Growth management works in Washington — Local accomplishments under the GMA

Every day citizens are seeing the benefits of growth management planning in communities all across Washington. Here are accomplishments achieved in 2003 and 2004.

- The cities of Redmond and Kirkland adopted several provisions to promote innovative techniques for affordable housing.



City of Washougal

- Washougal based its GMA updates on the results of a series of open houses to assess citizens' values about the community.
- Seattle enacted an ordinance to reduce parking standards for affordable housing projects.
- Riverwalk Point 1 – an affordable, sustainable housing project in Spokane – offers 52 units to very low-income households.
- Land for an affordable housing project was set-aside at the Taluswood Master Planned Development in Issaquah through the efforts of ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) cities.
- Bellevue strengthened its downtown plan by focusing on solutions for increased transportation needs and planning for development.
- Sumner developed an East Main Street design strategy to transform a former state highway into a historic downtown main street. Sumner also utilized a collaborative process for updating the city's critical areas ordinance.
- Snohomish developed a detailed economic development strategy for five different land use districts.

- Bellingham saved thousands of dollars by installing rain gardens instead of conventional stormwater vaults to manage runoff at two parking lots. This approach lowered construction costs by 75 to 80 percent.
- Kirkland updated its comprehensive plan with 51 community conversation meetings. More than 950 people participated.
- To update its comprehensive plan, Vancouver set up an advisory committee and offered open houses, focus groups, and a Web survey.
- King County established a program to make livability and health higher priorities in land use decisions and transportation investments.
- The historic Oakland Block in Bellingham was renovated to offer 20 low- to moderate-income housing units plus commercial and office space.
- The Tri-Cities Rivershore Enhancement Council guided development of numerous projects along the Columbia River ranging from trail improvements to rivershore plan implementation to waterfront development.
- Richland undertook a Downtown Revitalization Partnership Project to enhance and strengthen the downtown commercial area into a more pedestrian-friendly environment.



- Kent Station – the product of local, state, federal, and private efforts – brings new jobs to the community, provides open space in an urban setting, and maximizes the role of public transportation.



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